

# THE CORRESPONDENT.

---

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

---

BY GEORGE HOUSTON, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

---

No. 3.

NEW-YORK, FEBRUARY 7, 1829.

Vol. 5.

---

## CORRESPONDENCE.

---

### EXPERIENCES.

Mr. Editor—I have observed that relating experiences is all the rage in the present day; and rather than carry the appearance of singularity, I offer an outline of my own; which you may, if you please, insert in your paper.

I cannot commence with the usual boast, that I am the captain of sinners. As far back as my recollection serves, my father was devoted to episcopacy. I was ten years of age when he dissented, and joined a presbyterian church. At fourteen I beheld him again a seceder, and he united himself with the close communion baptists. These innovations raised doubts in my mind, and particularly the last set me seriously to thinking. What, thought I, certain tenets have been successively urged upon me on pain of eternal fire; and yet on these very points my parent, with all his experience and maturity of mind, wavers himself: points which have convulsed a considerable portion of the world for many centuries, are represented to me as self-evident truths. Often in his fire-side conversations, or discussions, I could hear interpolations, forgeries, difficulty of distinguishing between forged and original texts, urged as argument; these roused my curiosity. Happening on a Sunday to have in my hand, a treatise on the science of astronomy, I was questioned as to the nature of it: I answered, but was quickly told that no book but the bible should be read on that day. Here, for the first time, I ventured to open a conversation on the merits of the scriptures. I remarked, that an evil tree could not bring forth good fruit. Very true, said my sire. How then, said I, can you hold to be genuine a book which, for fourteen hundred years, has been in the hands of men whom you consider children of the devil; and whom your forefathers thought unfit to live; and by these men your book has undergone great alterations? We do not, said he, receive it on the authority of the Latin church; but on that of the Greek and Abyssinian churches; and by the gift of faith we know these to be genuine. Is not your present translation, said I, the work of the Romish church? I perceived a flush on his cheek, which indicated to me, that he, whose duty it was to give me correct ideas, had prevaricated. He immediately left the room, and me to draw my own inferences.

Of, from the pulpit, did I hear the silly priest, wrestling in prayer against the sin of unbelief. What a humiliating confession, thought I, is this, that in spite of all their efforts to stifle the truth; to encourage folly with hope; and to deter reason by fear; facts would recur to their minds, and give the lie to their mysteries and impossibilities. No wonder they complain the want of faith is the most besetting of all sins.—Thus led by my reason to compare and deduce, I soon perceived that the whole system was false. I, therefore, had to seek another more conformable to the principles of Nature. I now rest on deism; and should atheism be demonstrated to me, I would scorn to conceal my conviction.

I now consider myself morally, as physically, free. Having discarded all idea of supernaturals, the silent sepulchre has no terrors for me; no imaginary fears distract me; no visionary hopes of future bliss intrude to mar my present enjoyments: the hour of my dissolution is viewed with all the philosophic coolness of a Socrates or a Seneca. Accordingly, I have made such arrangements as will enable my remains to be instrumental in promoting anatomical science. I wish the practice were more general among liberals. Their lives and deaths, unlike that of the Christians, would thus subserve the best of purposes; and at the same time, furnish an undeniable refutation to that base slander of the avaricious Young, that “men may live fools, but fools they cannot die;” meaning, they cannot die masters of their own reason. I know of no scruples a freethinker can have; and the act becomes a philanthropist. With those in the tomb, contrast me on the dissecting table, aiding the knowledge of the human system; unfolding the nature of diseases; and confirming the simple truth, that nothing exists independent of matter.

I cannot leave you without mentioning another, and more recent experience I have had, that our opposers are often more depraved than they represent us to be; preaching charity and practising persecution. I allude to the editor of a paper, published in this town, entitled “Reformer and Moralist,” from which I give you the following extract respecting the *Free Press Association*: “the whole club are no better than beasts, and ought only to be considered as such; they are the rabble of the city, and fit only to be deposited in the common jails.” Mark the end of this hypocrite! His paper has shared the Antidote’s fate, aged twelve months; and he has since committed the crime of forgery. But the “glory of God and the prosperity of the church, demands” that the case be brought not before a public court. My experience proves to me that there is nothing discouraging in this. Truth in her progress beckons you to follow, and bids you “cry aloud, spare not, but lift up your voice like a trumpet; and shew a profligate clergy their transgressions, and each unfaithful politician his sins.” In vain may the orthodox sons of superstition attempt to stem the tide of intelligence which has burst, and is bursting, upon us. Unable to check, they attempt to divert it. But their ill meant charity, in their religious schools, will militate against them through the power of experience; which eventually must conduct the world to mental freedom.

J. T.

Southbridge, Ms. Jan. 15th, 1829.

## DOCTOR TO THE PRIEST.

February 9, 1824.

Sir—In looking over the observations which are contained in yours of the second current, I really in reply have little to say, but that little I wish to communicate, in case you may imagine from my silence, that what you have said has had a tendency to shake the general tenor of my argument. In my last I granted you the existence of Jesus, though it appeared to me doubtful; and I rested the chain of my reasoning upon the grand basis of nature itself, to which, in your present answer, you have not in the least degree alluded.

Could you present to mankind a system free from the many incongruities that accompany Christianity, I can assure you, there would be fewer sceptics; but when the philosophic mind takes a view of all that is connected with this religion, and finds that it has nothing to support its fabric but obscure dogmas revolting to common sense, there is little wonder that men, escaped from the bondage of early prejudices, throw such unintelligible doctrines into the back ground. While Christianity is connected with objects that are entirely inaccessible to our senses, and of course incapable of demonstration, I shall always feel convinced, that it has no more claim to truth, than the pretensions of a thousand other religions, which offer the same proof to substantiate their divinity. I never heard of a religion without miracles, and therefore, when you state that Mahomet did not resort to them, I really feel surprised that the character of this adventurer should be so much overlooked. Do not the followers of Mahomet believe in the miraculous vision of Gabriel, who transmitted from heaven, leaf by leaf, the pages of the Koran? Do they not believe, that in one night, Mahomet traversed ninety heavens, mounted upon a monster which they call Borak? Is it not related, that their prophet, being endowed with the gift of miracles, walked in the sunshine without a shadow? That he caused trees already withered to resume their verdure, filled the wells and cisterns with water, and cut in two equal parts the body of the moon? If these are not *miracles*, I know not what constitutes them; and we have undoubtedly the same species of proof that they were performed, which is brought forward to support the evidence of miracles wrought by those who are said to have founded Christianity. In my last, I alluded to events almost of a similar kind. I shewed, that to establish your religion, the great order of nature was reversed, and stories palmed upon mankind, as weak, and as silly, as ever were invented to deceive the Turks or confound the Pagans. Till these inconsistencies are done away with, Christianity will continue to be exposed as a fraud: for all men who think rationally will sooner believe, that the different records handed down to us, by human invention, are more liable to abound in error, than that even an atom of the universe can undergo any change in its nature.

With respect to the dark ages, when you argue in favor of them, you really forget what history unfolds to us. Christianity was a thing entirely unknown to the bulk of mankind. Even in those countries where it is said to have been taught, a few priests only knew the secret; for, till the reformation, the bible was never seen beyond the walls of a monastery. The dark ages present to us the most miserable barbarism.



The Pagans, as they are named, will vie in point of character with the Christians. Who cannot but admire the emperor Saladin, a man who fell covered with virtue amid the sanguinary and horrific deeds of the *pious* crusaders—a set of barbarians, that with the banners of Christ carried desolation, and ruin, wherever they went? In fact, none can think of this part of the history of Christianity without horror; none can ever view it without considering it as one of the most durable monuments of human folly that the world exhibits. All that you have said only unfolds to me how feebly Christianity holds its ground. You have done nothing to prove its good effect upon the actions of mankind. If it ever exalted any to the state of angels, and brought forward a few who were willing to make sacrifices; on the other hand, it has sunk millions into the gulph of perdition. Throughout the whole period of its history, we hear of nothing but bloody massacres, cruel persecutions, and all those horrid deeds at which humanity recoils. I, therefore, contend, that the present degree of improvement among mankind, is not owing to the influence of any religion; but purely to the intelligent rays of science, which, without doubt, will ultimately be the means of expelling from the earth those pernicious dogmas, that have ever been the favorite tenets of those who have allowed themselves to be led by the unintelligible ravings of theology.

Your remarks, regarding the fact that Christianity is not universal, would convince any one, that were it for no other consideration, we ought to reject the idea of its emanating from an all powerful being. We are expressly given to understand, that it was for the good of all mankind that it was promulgated; and the circumstance of it being known only to a small portion of the human race, either implies the impotence, or the malevolence of a deity. This question involves the very point which we are discussing. The difference that exists among nations or individuals, with regard to the various degrees of happiness, can be explained upon natural principles; and if there exist *wise* reasons for the limits of Christianity, I should really wish to see them fully developed. It has all along been the cry of theologians, that the plans of the deity are inscrutable—a resort to which they never fail to cling when they are embarrassed in perplexing arguments; and thus men always will be embarrassed till they are content to abide by the unerring and perpetual laws of nature.

#### LECTURES ON KNOWLEDGE.

By FRANCES WRIGHT.

*To the reader.*—The substance of the three lectures on knowledge, which will appear in our present and subsequent numbers were first delivered in the court house of Cincinnati; and then by request of the citizens, were re-delivered in the Cincinnati theatre. The same discourses have since been given in several places; and it is my intention to repeat them in as many sections of the country as health and circumstances may permit. The efforts made by the advocates of error are not confined to one town or to one state. Their theatre is equally the village as the city, the forest wilderness as the cultivated plain, the rich fields of southern opulence and the smiling regions of northern industry. The

friends of truth are then called to labor the same vineyard, and to replace the tares with wholesome seed.

Conceiving this duty to be the more urgent, inasmuch as it is greatly neglected, it will be my endeavor to fulfil it to the extent permitted by my abilities and circumstances. And in following out the work which the cause of human improvement lay upon her advocates, I hope not merely through the columns of this paper, but by means of public lectures, to encourage the popular examination of all existing opinions, and to assist in the developement of the first principles of just knowledge and just practice. Previously to the discussion of isolated topics or the minute analysis of existing opinions, I have considered the establishing of some first premises to be a matter of necessity. It is these which I have endeavored to establish in the following preliminary lectures on knowledge; and it is because I consider them as essential, or rather as indispensable, that I open every where my public discourses with those in which these first premises are compromised.

I have presented these discourses in the present volume, as delivered in the Cincinnati theatre. To the public of that city to whom they were first spoken, I also first engaged to give them in print; some local allusions will therefore be found in them supplied by the singular excitement previously kindled in the Ohio metropolis by the servants of religion, no less than the unseemly abuse levelled by the pulpit thunderers equally against my auditors as myself.

FRANCES WRIGHT.

New-Harmony, 28th September, 1828.

#### LECTURE I.

When I first entered upon the preliminary course of lectures which I am now about to deliver for the second time in this city, it was with a doubtful hope of awakening, and a yet more doubtful hope of fixing, your attention. The same cause which animated me to the experiment, inspired my apprehension as to its result. I knew the unnatural excitement which had been kindled in a sense opposed to just knowledge and sound reasoning, and I feared lest you should shrink from an appeal made only to your understandings, and, through them, to your hearts. Still had I some reliance in the power of truth, much fond reliance in the destined triumph of the cause I serve. The probability—nay! but the possibility of success had been worth more than all efforts; and amply—richly have mine been repaid by the request which brings us together this evening.

Never have I complied with a desire more readily than that which comes as a pledge of your willingness to enquire and ambition to learn. Where this willingness and this ambition exist, there is every requisite. Truth needs not the excitement of passion to be felt; knowledge seeks not heated imaginations to be understood. In the calm of the reason, in the composure of the feelings do they delight. They ask to be questioned, to be examined, to be weighed. Let them be weighed; and if they be pure, if they be genuine, they shall not be found wanting.

I am led to these observations by the knowledge that your accustomed teachers have followed an opposite method. Instead of addressing the reason, they have spoken to the fancy: instead of seeking your improvement, they have triumphed through your ignorance. They have

reached your confidence by the way of your terrors, and employed your confidence in building up their power and advancing their worldly gain.

As my object is different so are the means I shall employ. In my endeavor to develop the nature of human knowledge and the rule of human practice, I will engage, if not wholly to enlighten, yet never to mislead; I will show you no error, though I pretend not to show all the truth. Of that which I am ignorant I shall not speak; and what is not by myself clearly understood, I shall not insult you by attempting to explain.

Being under the impression that I was to address in this building a new, as well as a more extensive audience, I decided on a repetition of the preliminary discourses first delivered in your court house. I call them preliminary, as they are in fact intended simply to open the door of that temple into which, as I fondly trust, you and your children, this nation, and all mankind will at last enter; there to sit down in peace and universal love.

We may never see that day. It may not be ours to take sure possession of that fair habitation where strife enters not, and from which misery flies. But let us at least open the portal. Let us together pass the threshold of the blessed abode. Let us hail the effects of its pure atmosphere, and lift our foreheads assured and serene; regarding each other with confidence, all nature with confidence, and assuming in our thoughts and actions that self possession and that self respect, which there, and there alone in the temple of just knowledge, can be found.

Here in this land conquered by the arm of liberty, must that temple stand or stand no where. The hopes and prospects of our race have followed the sun to the west. Here may the voice of truth be heard; and here shall she speak, though bigotry frown or priestly usurpation threaten.

Permit me again to impress on you, that the investigations which we are about to enter are only introductory to those in which I believe it important, or rather indispensable to your happiness that you engage.

The most rational pursuit of sentient beings is happiness; and happiness can only be found by and with the aid of knowledge. Be it our endeavor to distinguish the *right* road; for that once found, our progress will be easy.

We will now open our investigations by an enquiry into the nature and object of just knowledge; and if we succeed in ascertaining these, we will farther examine the causes which at present impede our progress, and the means best calculated at once to remove such impediments, and to advance us in the course which it is our interest to pursue.

If we consider man in comparison with other animals, we find him distinguished by one principle. This principle which is shared by no other existence within the range of our observation, gives him all his pre-eminence. It constitutes, indeed, all his excellence. By its neglect or cultivation he remains ignorant or degraded, or becomes intelligent and happy; and, as he owes to it all that has elevated him above the brute in past time or at the present, so in it may he find rich hope and promise for the future.

Much does it behove us, then, earnestly to consider this distinguishing principle of our nature. Much does it behove us to understand the ful-



ness of its importance and its power; and to know that, as without it we should be but as the beasts of the field, so with it we may rise in the scale of being, until every vice which now degrades, every fear which unnerves, and every prejudice which enchains us, shall disappear beneath its influence.

I advert to the simple, but all-important principle of improvement. Weak as we are compared to the healthy strength we are conscious would be desirable; ignorant as we are compared to the height and breadth and depth of knowledge which spreads around us far as the universal range of matter itself; miserable as we are compared to the enjoyment of which we feel ourselves capable; yet in this living principle we see nothing beyond or above us, nothing to which we or our descendants may not attain of great, of beautiful, of excellent. But to *feel* the power of this mighty principle, to urge it forward in its course and accelerate the change in our condition which it promises, we must awaken to its observation. Are we yet awake to this? Do we know what we are, or have we ever asked ourselves what we might be? Are we even desirous of becoming wiser better and happier? and if desirous, are we earnestly applied to effect the change?

It is probable that some vague desire of advancing in knowledge pervades every bosom. We find every where some deference paid to the great principle of our nature in the growing demand for schools and colleges. We seem to have discovered that the faculties of man demand care for their development; and that, like the marble of the quarry, he must be shaped and polished ere he will present the line of beauty.

But alas! here is the difficulty. If agreed that something must be done, we see but darkly what that something is. While eager to be doing, we are still in doubt both as to the end to be attained and the means to be employed. While anxious to learn, we are but too often ignorant of the very nature of knowledge. We are unacquainted with her haunts and her habitation, and seek her where she is not to be found. It may be useful, then, before we engage in the labyrinth of learning, that we examine carefully *what knowledge is*.

If we ask this in our schools, we shall be told, that knowledge is an acquaintance with the structure of our own language, a familiarity with foreign, especially with dead languages. We shall moreover hear of history, geography, astronomy, &c. Do we ask the same in our colleges, we shall hear farther of law, medicine, surgery, theology, mathematics, chemistry and philosophy, natural and mental: and we shall be farther told, that when a youth has mastered all these sounding names, and puzzled through all the learning useful or useless, attached to them—he is well taught and thoroughly educated. It may be so. And yet may he be very ignorant of what it imports him to know. Nay more! in despite of an intimate acquaintance with all the most esteemed branches of knowledge, he may be utterly unacquainted with the object and nature of knowledge itself. Let us then enquire again *what knowledge is*.

Is it not in the first place acquaintance with ourselves? and secondly to all things with which we stand in relation?

How are we to obtain this acquaintance? By observations and patient enquiry.

Let us now examine what are the objects really submitted to the investigation of our senses.

These may be all embraced under the generic term *matter*.

Were we to proceed minutely in our analysis we should observe, that matter, as existing around us, appears under three forms, the gaseous, the liquid and the solid; and that under one or other of these forms may be accurately classed all that is submitted to our observation—all in short that we can see, hear, feel, taste or smell. But to enter at present into such details would be foreign to our purpose.

I will therefore pass on to observe, that the accurate and patient investigation of matter, in all its subdivisions, together with all its qualities and changes, constitutes a good education. And that in proportion as we ascertain, in the course of investigation, the real qualities and actual changes of matter, so do we acquire knowledge. The view of knowledge we have here taken is simple; and it may be observed, that not in this case only, but in all others accuracy and simplicity go hand in hand. All truth is simple, for truth is only fact. The means of attaining truth are equally simple. We have but to seek and we shall find; to open our eyes and ears; without prejudice to observe; without fear to listen, and dispassionately to examine, compare and draw our conclusions.

The field of knowledge is around, about and within us. Let us not be alarmed by sounding words, and let us not be deceived by them. Let us look to things. It is things which we have to consider. Words are, or more correctly should be, only the signs of things. I say they should be; for it is a most lamentable truth, that they are now very generally conceived to constitute the substance of knowledge. Words, indeed, should seem at present contrived rather for the purpose of confusing our ideas than administering to their distinctness and arrangement. Instead of viewing them as the shadows, we mistake them for the substance; and conceive that in proportion as we enlarge our vocabulary, we multiply our acquirements.

Vain then, will be the attempt to increase our knowledge, until we understand where we are to look for it, and in what it consists. Here is the first stepping-stone. Let our foot but firmly strike, and our after progress is easy.

And in what lies the importance of this first step in human knowledge? In the accuracy in which it brings in all our ideas. It places us at once on firm ground, introduces us into the field of real enquiry, and lays the rein of the imagination in the hand of judgment. Difficult were it to exaggerate the importance of the step which involves such consequences. Until we bring accuracy to our thoughts, and we may add accuracy to the words employed for their expression—we can make no progress. We may wander, indeed, and most certainly shall wander, in various paths; but they will be paths of error. The straight broad road of improvement it will not be ours to tread, until we take heed unto our feet and know always whither we are going.

Imagine—and how easy is it to imagine when we have but to look round us or within ourselves—imagine the confusion of hopes desires, ambitions and expectations with which the scholar enters, and but too of-



ten leaves, the halls of science. On entering them he conceives that some mysterious veil, like the screen of the holy of holies, is about to be withdrawn, and that he is to look at things far removed from common life, and raised far above the vulgar apprehension. On leaving them, he has his memory surcharged with a confusion of ideas, and a yet worse confusion of words. He knows, perhaps, the properties of ciphers and of angles; the names and classifications of birds, fishes quadrupeds, insects and minerals; the chemical affinities of bodies; can measure star from star; analyze invisible substances; detail in chronological order the rise and fall of nations, with their arts, sciences and sects of philosophy. He can do all this and more, and yet, perhaps is there neither arrangement in his knowledge, distinctness in his ideas, nor accuracy in his language. And while possessed of many valuable facts, there is blended with all and with each a thousand illusions. Thus it is that so many wordy pedants, and hair-brained, or shallow disputants are sent forth from the schools of all countries; while those who do honor to their species by rendering service in their generation, are, most generally, what is called self-taught.

Greatly, very greatly to be desired is a just mode of instruction. It would not only shorten the road of knowledge, but carpet it with flowers. We should then tread it in childhood with smiles of cheerfulness; and, as we followed its pleasant course, horizon after horizon would open upon us, delighting and improving our minds and feelings through life unto our latest hour. But if it is of the first importance to be launched aright in infancy, the moment we distinctly perceive what knowledge is, we may, at any age, start boldly for its attainment. I have said we may start boldly—ay! and there lies the surety of our success. If we bring not the good courage of minds covetous of truth and truth only, prepared to hear all things, examine all things, and decide upon all things according to evidence, we should do more wisely to sit down contented in ignorance than to bestir ourselves only to reap disappointment. But let us once look round upon this fair material world, as on the book which it behoves us to read; let us understand that in this book there are no puzzling mysteries, but a simple train of occurrences which it imports us to observe, with an endless variety of substances and existences which it imports us to study—what is there, then, to frighten us? what is there not rather to encourage our advance?

Yet how far are we from this simple perception of simple things! how far from that mental composure which can alone fit us for enquiry! How prone are we to come to the consideration of every question with heads and hearts pre-occupied! how prone to shrink from any opinion, however reasonable, if it be opposed to any, however unreasonable, of our own! How disposed are we to judge in anger those who call upon us to think, and encourage us to enquire! To question our prejudices seems nothing less than sacrilege; to break the chains of our ignorance nothing short of impiety!

Perhaps at this moment she who speaks is outraging a prejudice—(shall I be forgiven the world?) Perhaps, among those who hear me, there are some who deem it both a presumption and an impropriety for a woman to reason with her fellow creatures.

Did I know of a surety this prejudice to prevail among my hearers, I should be indeed disposed to reason with them. I should venture to ask whether truth had any sex: and I should venture farther to ask whether they count for nothing, for something or for every thing, the influence of women over the destinies of the human race.

Shall I be forgiven for adverting, most unwillingly, to myself? Having assumed an unusual place, I feel that to my audience some explanation is due.

Stimulated in my early youth by I know not what of pitying sympathy with human suffering, and by I know not what persuasion that our race was not of necessity born to ignorance and its companion, vice, but that it possessed faculties and qualities which pointed to virtue and enjoyment; stimulated at once by this pity for the actual condition of man and this hope of a possible melioration, I applied myself to the discovery of the causes of the one, and of the means for effecting the other.

I have as little the inclination to obtrude on you the process of investigation and course of observation I followed through the course of an eventful youth, as you would probably have to listen to them. Suffice it, that I have been led to consider the growth of knowledge and its equal distribution as the best—may I say the only, means for reforming the condition of mankind. Shall I be accused of presumption for imagining that I could be instrumentally promoting this, as it appears to me, good work? Shall I appear additionally presumptuous for believing that my sex and my situation tended rather to qualify than to incapacitate me for the undertaking?

*To be continued.*

---

### **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1829.**

---

*Lectures on Knowledge.*—We have commenced, on our fourth page of this number, the lectures of Miss Frances Wright, as they were first delivered in Cincinnati, and afterwards published, from her own MS., in the New-Harmony Gazette. Whenever she has leisure, Miss Wright intends to revise, amend, and republish her lectures, as a pamphlet, for the accommodation of those who wish to have them in that form.

---

#### **PAINE'S BIRTH DAY:**

On Thursday, the 29th ult., the members of the *Free Press Association*, and a number of other friends of liberal principles, partook of a dinner, in the New-York Coffee House, prepared by Mr. Stackhouse, in commemoration of the anniversary of the birth of THOMAS PAINE. The chair was occupied by Mr. Offen; who, after the cloth was removed, addressed the meeting as follows:—

Fellow citizens—Having now met together to commemorate the anniversary of the greatest man that ever appeared on the earth, I claim your indulgence, for a few moments, while I endeavor to convey to your minds some faint idea of the vast services he has conferred on the human race.

It is true, the bare remembrance of THOMAS PAINE is detestable in the estimation of the superstitionists; but I want no better reason than this for admiring his character, and, on every occasion that may offer, vindicating his name from the foul aspersions of an interested priesthood.

When this great luminary first arose to shed his beneficent rays on a benighted world, mankind, in this country, as well as in Europe, were groaning under the weight of civil and religious tyranny. In these United States—when this vast continent was languishing under a foreign despotism—at a period when internal divisions tore to pieces its very heart strings—and the detestable measures pursued by the government of England, almost reduced the truly patriotic to a state of despair. At such a period, when hope itself had nearly become extinct, did the immortal PAINE, confident in the correctness of his principles, and determined to avow them at all hazards, step forward, and in his admirable treatise, entitled “Common Sense,” urge the necessity of a separation from the oppressors, and the formation of a government congenial with the true principles of liberty.

This fearless attempt, in which he stood alone, had the desired effect. The project was almost unanimously hailed with rapture—the slumbering energies of the nation were roused—our forefathers rushed to arms—and by conforming to those principles, which the mighty mind of PAINE was alone capable of conceiving—that political fabric was reared, of which we now so justly boast, because it secures to all our citizens the enjoyment of the rights conferred on them by Nature.

But while PAINE, like a skillful pilot, was safely steering our weather beaten, and almost shipwrecked bark into a safe harbor, he did not lose sight of his native country, still degraded by a cruel and barbarous tyranny. Having aided in so essential a manner in establishing the emancipation of the United States, he proceeded to England, and there produced his “Rights of Man.” This work, like his “Common Sense,” caused a sensation which would have proved as fatal to the oppressors as the latter did in this country, had not the government been in possession of the public money; which they employed in bribery and corruption with so much effect, as to avert for a while the storm that threatened to burst on their devoted heads.

It is unnecessary for me to expatiate, in an assembly like this, on the superiority of the principles advocated by MR. PAINE. Having experienced their beneficial results, you are not only all acquainted with, but know how to appreciate them. Not so, however, with the mass of mankind, for whom he labored, and who are now enjoying the fruits of his exertions. By them he was neglected, and even persecuted while alive. By them his memory is still traduced.

To what cause are we to ascribe this? Not, surely, to the forgetfulness of a people for whom he had done so much; and for whose emancipation he would, had it been called for, have shed the last drop of his blood.

No, it is in that vile superstition, which, like a pestilence, desolates the land, we are to look for the cause of such unparalleled ingratitude and fanaticism. It is to that direful foe to human happiness we are com-



pelled to attribute all the injuries, all the wrongs he suffered during life, and all the odium which has been heaped on his memory since he was laid in the silent tomb.

Had MR. PAINE ever succumbed—ever bent the knee to aproud aristocracy—ever flattered princes, or winked at the impositions of the priesthood, his name might have been allowed to sink into oblivion amongst the names of that herd of sycophants who surround the thrones of tyrants. But having attacked vice in its strong hold—stripped error of its disguise—and pointed out to oppressed and bewildered mortals the road to freedom and happiness—this, and this alone, is the cause why his principles have been assailed—why his character has been traduced—and why his writings, which teem with the purest precepts of morality, are frequently consigned to the flames by a superstitious and fanatical multitude.

Never let us forget the humanity of this truly great man towards Louis XVI. of France. His mind was too great, too generous, and too humane to vote for the death of that unfortunate, though tyrannical ruler. Although, in theory, he despised monarchy, his benevolent heart could feel for, and plead the cause of suffering humanity even in the person of a king. Cruelty and revenge were passions too base and ignoble to reside in his expansive bosom. He delighted in seeing all men happy; and he considered no sacrifice too great which tended to promote the general good.

Fellow citizens—I shall not detain you longer in attempting to eulogise one with whose splendid talents, and whose incomparable virtues you must be all familiar; but shall conclude with observing, in the language of an English writer, that “if a selection were to be made of all the characters who have dignified human nature by a display of talent and ability, and called forth the approbation of the good and great in all ages of the world, I am persuaded that not one amongst the number would more command our admiration than the immortal PAINE—a name dear to the recollection, and precious in the estimation of every individual whose wish is to see the great family of mankind free and happy. He was a character capable of weeping over the calamities of his fellow creatures, occasioned by a cruel, accursed, and murderous system of misrule. He was one who embraced every opportunity to manifest his indignation against tyrants—one who despised the distinctions in which fraud and folly have dressed the different orders of mankind—one whose chief aim was to support the weak, to instruct the ignorant, and civilize the barbarous—one who never beheld dignity in kings, nor virtue in crowns—who detested robbery and rapine, whatever shape they assumed, whether by the pretended piety of mitred monsters, the imperious orders of starred sycophants, or the rigorous decrees of ribboned ruffians.”

The chairman concluded by giving as a toast:

The memory of THOMAS PAINE. (Drank in solemn silence; the company standing.)

The following ode, written for the occasion, was then sung by Mr. Burger:

## ODE TO THE MEMORY OF THOMAS PAINE.

*The glory Paine shed around Liberty's Tree.*

AIR—Star spangled banner.

When tyranny, drench'd in the blood of mankind,  
 The earth with destruction's foul besom was sweeping,  
 And daring to bind her dark chains on the mind  
 Where NATURE, and REASON, and FREEDOM were weeping.  
 Oh, what on that night of the tyrant's dread might,  
 To cheer the lone victims, shed forth a pure light?—  
 'Twas the glory PAINE shed around Liberty's Tree,  
 Directing the way to be happy and free.

The light of that glory on FREEDOM first flash'd,  
 And shew'd her the chains and the despots that bound her;  
 She rose, and to pieces her fetters she dash'd,  
 And swore that these trammels no more should clank round her.  
 And what, when her chain she had broke with disdain,  
 Taught FREEDOM her rights, and those rights to maintain?—  
 'Twas the glory, &c.

NOW REASON from lethargy starting awake,  
 As o'er her the day of that glory was dawning,  
 Beheld the vile halter, the rack, and the stake,  
 Display'd in the dungeons that round her were yawning;  
 The cloak then she drew from the den and its crew,  
 And let in the light that expos'd them to view—  
 'Twas the glory, &c.

Fair NATURE, long wrapt in delusion's dark gloom.  
 Now comes on that light, in her own native beauty,  
 Triumphant to tread upon BIGOTRY's tomb,  
 And from her own volume teach mankind their duty;  
 For tyranny's might, and the bigot's foul night,  
 Must perish for ay in the blaze of that light—  
 'Twas the glory PAINE shed around Liberty's Tree,  
 Directing the way to be happy and free.

*To be continued.*


---

*Sunday mail.*—Although, in our last, we expressed an opinion that there was nothing to apprehend, injurious to liberty, from the measures pursuing by the fanatics, relative to the stoppage of the mail on Sunday, we are, nevertheless, pleased that the inhabitants of this great metropolis have come forward, and boldly and energetically avowed their disapprobation of a proceeding, which, if persisted in, might have a tendency to engender disputes fatal to public tranquility. Even a slight acquaintance with the intolerant principles of the religious party who originated the project, is sufficient to satisfy every reflecting mind, that they are prepared to re-act, in this country, all the bloody scenes, which have disgraced the Christian world since superstition gained the ascendancy.

But before they can ever hope to accomplish this, they must possess themselves of the reins of government—have entire control of the public purse—and such an army at their disposal as would enable them to put down, or, at least, defy all opposition. That they *calculate* on effecting all this, there is, doubtless, every reason for believing; but that their calculations are erroneous, we are as certainly convinced as we are of our existence. It is only when ignorance predominated that mankind fell an easy prey to the designing; it was only when science was in its infancy that the fanatic and the bigot could calculate on success in their crusade against useful knowledge. All the errors hitherto prevailing, are to be traced to the want of information among, and to the credulity of the multitude, which rendered them the pliant instruments of civil as well as religious despots. But the case is altered: Science has shed her benignant rays over a great portion of the earth formerly benumbed by superstition—the mind of man has, in consequence, become more intelligent, and a jealousy has been excited as to his natural rights, which it is as impossible to control, or even to lessen, as it is to control the motion of the universe. Knowledge having effected a sure footing in this country, and our institutions being every way congenial with her growth, the friends of mental emancipation may safely anticipate the complete triumph of liberal principles over bigotry and fanaticism.

At a very large and respectable meeting of the citizens of New-York, at Tammany Hall, on Saturday evening, January 31st, 1829, convened for the purpose of expressing their sentiments on the proposition now before the Congress of the United States, to stop the transportation of the public mails and the opening of the postoffices on Sunday:

Preserved Fish, Esq. was called to the chair, and Elisha Tibbits and Daniel Jackson, Esqs. were appointed secretaries.

A call being made for the reading of the report of the committee of the senate of the United States on the subject of postoffices and the transportation of the mails, which having been read, it was

Resolved, that the principles contained in the said report, are highly approved by this meeting.

The following preamble and resolutions were then presented by Saul Alley, Esq. prefaced by some pertinent remarks, and after having been read, were unanimously adopted:—

Whereas this meeting has witnessed with mingled emotions of regret and alarm, the exertions of a certain portion of our citizens to influence the congress of the United States by their memorials, “so to amend the existing laws regulating the postoffice department, as to prevent the transportation and opening of mails, and delivery of letters, newspapers, and packages, on the day which is almost unanswerably acknowledged as the christian Sabbath:” And inasmuch as they appear to have lost sight of the precepts and genuine character of the religion which they profess, by supposing it requires the aid of civil government for its support—and that congress possesses the power to favor any particular class of citizens, in propagating their peculiar views, either of the doctrines or duties of religion. This alarm is excited by the attempts which have been made, and are now making, to influence and control the public opinion—to make all our literary and benevolent institutions subservient to sectarian purposes, and more especially by the recent extensive concerted



and simultaneous measures to induce the national legislature (by a multitude of memorials and petitions) to enact laws which would violate a fundamental principle of the federal constitution.

And whereas this meeting considers it the unalienable right of every man to worship almighty God, when and where, and in what manner it may accord with the convictions of his own understanding; and that the only legitimate course to be pursued by every religious sect which wishes to increase its number and influence, is to accomplish it by the example of piety, benevolence and liberality, rather than by the operation of coercive measures. Convinced of the correctness of these views, this meeting would respectfully remonstrate, not only against the proposed change of the existing laws regulating the postoffice department, but also against the passage of any law having for its object the regulation of religious duties, or which may in any way interfere with what properly belongs to the conscience of each individual. Therefore,

Resolved, That this meeting highly disapproves of the recent attempts of certain religious sects, who have combined to influence the national legislature to pass an act, which would favor their own peculiar views of religious duty, as not being only contrary to the letter, and spirit of the constitution which guarantees freedom of opinions to every citizen, but fraught with the most pernicious and dangerous consequences to our civil and religious liberties, and calculated to prepare the way for the final establishment of a national religion.

Resolved, That the late able report of the committee on postoffices, &c. to the senate of the United States, receives the fullest approbation of this meeting, and that we feel particular satisfaction in observing the prompt manner in which it was adopted by that honorable body.

Resolved, That in the opinion of this meeting it is the duty of every good citizen to frown with indignation upon every attempt on the part of any religious sect or denomination of christians, as such to obtain influence in the councils of the nation, whereby would be endangered the great and fundamental principles of religious and civil liberty, guaranteed to us by the constitution.

Resolved, That we have witnessed with great regret, the recent adjournment of the assembly of this state to join in a fast, not emanating with the authorities of the state, but at the special request of a sectarian congregation in Albany, thus exhibiting a fatal example of devotion to secular influence and hazarding the interests of this state, by interrupting public business, at the order of any synod who may order a similar fast, and this in fact in connexion with the attempt to stop the mails on Sunday, create just apprehensions that if religious partizans of any particular sect shall succeed in making the laws of the land tributary to their doctrines, it will be a signal for dangerous innovations on the civil and religious rights of the people, and we shall be called upon to surrender these inestimable blessings which were secured to us by the valor and fidelity of our fathers.

[The thanks of the meeting was voted to the New-York Enquirer, Evening Post and American; copies of the resolutions ordered to be transmitted to the President of the United States, and the speaker of the house of representatives; and a committee of sixteen appointed to communicate with the other cities and towns in the Union.]

**Free Press Association.**—The meetings of the Association are now held in the Bowery Long Room, opposite the Theatre. A lecture will be delivered to-morrow afternoon, (Sunday) at three o'clock, *on the doctrines of election*: text—"Jacob have I loved; Esau have I hated." Being in continuation of that delivered on Sunday, the 25th ult.

**Debating Institution.**—Last Sunday evening, the debate was attended by a numerous and respectable audience; and was very ably conducted. But as time would not permit all to be heard who were desirous to take part in the discussion, the question was adjourned until to-morrow evening, to be resumed in the same place, (Bowery Long Room) at half-past six o'clock.

**Question**—*Whether a revelation by a supreme being has ever been made to man; and if so, what are the evidences?*

Tickets of admission, (to be had at the door) three cents each. Ladies free.

The following works are sold at the Office of the *Correspondent*, New-York; by John Turner, 140 1-2 Market-st., Philadelphia; and by Joseph Savage, Syracuse:—

**ECCE HOMO**; or a Critical Inquiry into the History of Jesus of Nazareth, 12mo. bds. 75 cents—bound and gilt, \$1.

**VOLNEY'S RUINS OF EMPIRES**; with the LAW OF NATURE; a new translation, with plates, 8vo, bound and gilt, \$1 25.

**AGE OF REASON**, pocket edition, with plates, 37 1-2 cents.

**THE GOD OF THE JEWS AND CHRISTIANS**; embellished with a correct likeness—25 cents.

*View of the Metaphysical and Physiological Arguments in favor of Materialism*—25 cents.

*The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism*—25 cents.

#### AGENTS FOR THE CORRESPONDENT.

Philadelphia, Pa. John Turner, No. 140 1-2 Market-st.

Paterson, N. J. Robert Chiswell.

Red Hook, N. Y. Erastus Marshal.

Utica, N. Y. D. J. Morris.

Salina, N. Y. J. Curtis.

Geddisburg, N. Y. R. S. Orvis.

Laurenceburgh, In. J. Perceval.

Buffalo, N. Y. Isaac Smith.

Hamilton, O. Robert Hewes.

Kendal, O. Matthew Macey.

Dover, N. H. Joseph Lawton.

Hudson, N. Y. Moses Younglove.

Wilmington, De. Henry Heald.

Rochester, N. Y. E. Geddens.

Syracuse, N. Y. Joseph Savage.

The friends of liberal principles throughout the United States, are respectfully requested to accept of the Agency of the *Correspondent*. Four volumes are now completed, and sets can be had from the commencement, at the original subscription price, [\$1.50 a volume.]

The **CORRESPONDENT** is published every Saturday, at No. 6 William-street, New-York; and by Mr. John Turner, No. 140 1-2 Market-street, Philadelphia, at THREE DOLLARS per annum, in advance. All communications to be addressed to Mr. Geo. Houston, Editor, New-York.

GEORGE HOUSTON, JR., Printer, No. 6 William-street, New-York.